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SUBJECT: ARGENTINE FM TAIANA'S TRIP TO INDIA YIELDS FEW
CONCRETE RESULTS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 0707

11. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified, and not
for Internet distribution.

12. (U) Argentine FM Jorge Taiana led a delegation of over 70
businesspersons and GOA officials to India July 3-7. The
mission's goal, according to the office of the MFA's
Undersecretary for Foreign Trade, was to build on a trade
relationship currently worth approximately USD 1 billion per
year. The Argentine press reported small-scale individual
successes for some of the mission's business executives, and
quoted Taiana as saying that Indian PM Manmohan Singh "showed
interest in closing cooperation agreements in the space,
energy, food preparation, and pharmaceutical sectors." There
were no reports of any real breakthroughs, however.

13. (U) While the USD 1 billion bilateral trade figure does
not place India on the list of Argentina's top trading
partners, the bilateral trade is fairly one-sided in
Argentina's favor. Argentina enjoyed a USD 550 million
surplus in its India trade in 2005, and sees India as an
important growth market. India signed a fixed preference
trade agreement with Mercosur in January 2004, but trade
between Argentina and India had been growing rapidly even
before that signing -- it is up over 70 percent since 1999.
Argentina now senses an opportunity to diversify its exports
to India, which have traditionally been dominated by soy
products. Progress exporting Argentina's space technology
(Reftel) would be especially welcome in Buenos Aires.

14. (SBU) Comment: On the heels of the failed WTO ministerial
in Geneva, at which Argentina did not play a productive role,
Argentina probably wanted to send a signal that it has a
viable "Plan B" to turn to if the Doha round tanks. A large
and successful trade mission to India might have sent that
signal, but this was not that mission. That an Argentine
vintner has orders for an extra 12,000 bottles is nice, but
hardly the result Argentina was hoping for. There are
indications that President Kirchner plans to visit India
later this year; perhaps it was decided to save the real
results for that trip. End Comment.
GUTIERREZ